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DE RUEHNR #1439/01 0891007  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 301007Z MAR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8642  
INFO RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 9219  
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 5205  
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 4636  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1960  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2203  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2160  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 001439

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/29/2027

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SUBJECT: OPPOSITION POLITICS: SUSPICION, ALLIES, AND A  
HUMMER

REF: NAIROBI 1128

Classified By: Political Counselor Larry Andre for reasons  
1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Two opposition insiders recently shared their views on the current state of play within ODM-Kenya party ranks. While there is plenty of suspicion and alliance-making, there is still no apparent movement towards consensus on a single ODM-K presidential candidate or even on how to pick that candidate. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) In a recent conversation, Njee Muturi, Acting Executive Director of the KANU Party and personal assistant to Uhuru Kenyatta, and Member of Parliament Kiema Kilonzo, self-described best friend to top-polling ODM-K presidential hopeful Kalonzo Musyoka, told poloff that the opposition coalition ODM-K party is suffering organizational difficulties and mistrust (mostly directed at MP Raila Odinga). Muturi and Kilonzo represent the camps of two of ODM-K's seven presidential hopefuls. Muturi and Kilonzo also indicated that the party has yet to agree on a mechanism for selecting a candidate among the aspirants.

#### Suspicious Abound

¶3. (C) Muturi and Kilonzo both expressed frustration at the progress of their coalition ODM-K party. Confirming media reports that the administrative organization of ODM-K is overwhelmingly Raila-centric, Muturi commented that KANU, a "corporate" member of the coalition, is operating entirely on its own, parallel to ODM-K. He indicated that one of his goals was to integrate KANU more closely into the ODM secretariat, which is essentially LDP (Raila's and Musyoka's

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party) with a name change.

¶4. (C) Despite this goal, Muturi confessed that he thought after the "London fiasco" that ODM was finished. Muturi was referring to the planned ODM retreat in London in early March that was abruptly called off when several of the party's presidential aspirants backed out (reftel). Raila, on his way back from the US (bringing a gift armored, red Hummer), went ahead with the London fundraiser. The money he gathered from supporters such as expat Kenyan Gilbert Deya, whose name has been mentioned in connection with an alleged baby selling scam, would go straight into Raila's pockets, and not the ODM-K party treasury, Kilonzo and Muturi remarked. Both men joked about Raila's arrogance, recounting a story that Raila

or his people told: the reason the other ODM candidates backed out of the London trip was that there were 16 people signed up to sit with Raila at a fundraiser dinner (at 1,000 pounds a seat) two for Uhuru, and none for Kalonzo.

#### The Twist in the ODM Plot

15. (C) The men disagreed, however, on Raila's true intentions this election year. Muturi was certain Raila does not actually expect to be president. Raila knows he will not win, and he is a clever man, Muturi offered. Instead, he wants to be kingmaker, but not for a renegade king like Kibaki turned out to be. Raila wants a king who will jump when Raila says jump, he said. (COMMENT: Raila is overwhelmingly popular among his own Luo people, who make up about 14 percent of Kenya's population. However, he has "high negatives" almost everywhere else in the country. END COMMENT.)

16. (C) Who does Raila want to be president?, poloff asked Muturi. Musalia Mudavadi, a late-entrant to the litany of ODM presidential aspirants, a former VP whom Raila convinced to enter the contest, Muturi said. When a national delegates conference fails to give any one aspirant 51 percent (as stipulated in the ODM-K constitution), Raila will push for Mudavadi as a compromise candidate, he explained. (NOTE: ODM is considering two methods for choosing its candidate: the delegates' conference and "consensus" by which all aspirants will agree among themselves who will run. END NOTE.) Raila does not even want the national conference process to work, Muturi added. Raila's ally and ODM-K Executive Secretary MP Peter Nyong'o told PolCouns recently that Mudavadi would be a good compromise candidate, but he preferred one of the first tier candidates, i.e. Raila or Musyoka.

17. (C) Kilonzo thought otherwise, noting that he did not think it possible that Raila would step aside to support someone else. Kalonzo Musyoka, on the other hand, does want a national delegates conference. Kalonzo "naively" thinks it will work out, Kilonzo said. In his own opinion, however, Kilonzo added, the process of selecting delegates will be so prone to abuse and rigging (by the government), it will be worthless. If Kalonzo is not the candidate, he will throw his support to Uhuru, Kilonzo stated. Kilonzo and Muturi offered two possible presidential/vice presidential candidate combinations: William Ruto (another ODM hopeful) would be Mudavadi's running mate, or Uhuru would be Kalonzo's. Both agreed, however, that a ticket with both the president and the vice president from neighboring regions would not work, which is exactly what the two scenarios they described are.

#### "Our" Votes Falling Behind?

18. (C) Both men said they were frustrated that by "rigging" the voter registration process, Kibaki had pretty much locked up the necessary votes to win later this year. Muturi said with an increase over 2002 in the number of registered voters among the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru ethnic groups they now total 5.1 million votes of the 12.5 million total.

19. (C) COMMENT: Show-boating is one of Raila's best skills and the Hummer achieved exactly the effect he hoped for: front page coverage from all the dailies. It also earned him derisive comments from those who are ostensibly supporters of a unified ODM party. While it is difficult to imagine that Raila's proclamation that he is the one to next occupy State House is merely rhetoric, there is a precedent for him stepping aside to support a "national" candidate. He recognized in 2002 that Kibaki was the only one who could beat Uhuru. One certainty is that the whispering suspicion and mistrust within ODM undermines the party's public claims of unity. END COMMENT.  
RANNEBERGER